

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 309

By Cobb T

A RESOLUTION to commemorate the opening of the Polk
Presidential Hall at the James K. Polk Home.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to recognize those institutions dedicated to preserving and protecting the heritage and historical record of the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, the James K. Polk Ancestral Home in Columbia is one such estimable institution; on May 15, 2009, it will open Polk Presidential Hall, a new exhibition and educational facility devoted to the American Presidency, particularly the life and times of the eleventh President of the United States; and

WHEREAS, built as a church in 1882, the renovated structure will house an ongoing series of exhibitions and programs; the first of these exhibitions will be "Three from Tennessee: Frontier Path to the Presidency," which will focus on Andrew Jackson, James K. Polk, and Andrew Johnson, and the ways in which their frontier upbringings influenced their political careers; and

WHEREAS, aside from the White House, Columbia's James K. Polk Ancestral Home is the only one of President Polk's residences still standing; his final residence, a mansion in downtown Nashville, was razed in 1901; and

WHEREAS, Samuel Polk, a prosperous farmer and surveyor, built the Federal-style brick house in Columbia in 1816 while his oldest son, James, was attending the University of North Carolina. When the future President graduated in 1818, he returned to Columbia to practice law and begin his political career; he lived with his parents in the home before marrying Sarah Childress in 1824; and

WHEREAS, today, visitors to the Polk Home can see not only the original house, but also the detached kitchen building, which was reconstructed in 1946 on the original foundation, as well as the adjacent Sisters' House, occupied by two of the President's married sisters at different times; and

WHEREAS, the new Polk Presidential Hall will no doubt make a welcome addition to this historical property, providing an opportunity for casual visitors, amateur historians, and scholars alike to deepen their knowledge of a Tennessean who is frequently ranked as one of the nation's most capable and industrious presidents; and

WHEREAS, this State has reaped inestimable rewards from the dedicated work of historians and archivists like those who have maintained and expanded the James K. Polk Ancestral Home over the years; thanks to their prodigious efforts, Tennesseans today enjoy the many benefits afforded by a historical memory that closely connects the State's rich history to its prosperous present; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we celebrate the opening of Polk Presidential Hall at the James K. Polk Ancestral Home in Columbia, an event to be held May 15, 2009, and wish the staff, volunteers, and all its supporters the very best as they continue to share and preserve the history surrounding one of Tennessee's most distinguished citizens.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.